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283
[462]

The woman (23)

> 23. Among the Tuyuka, Bará, and in general the tribes of the headwaters of the Tiquié, Papurí, and Komé-ya, it is the man who prepares the miriti thread and the rede de "trinta fios" /net or hammock of "thirty threads"/.

prepares her thread by rubbing a bunch of fibers against her thigh. It is natural that this would make the thread dirty. In order to bleach it, they wash it well, using also the leaves of the papaya tree or lemon juice, resources that are obviously more recent.

First of all, she takes two bunches of fibers unequally, that is, the end of one of them projects farther on one side, and that of the other toward the opposite end. With the right hand she rolls toward the left, that is, against the thigh from the knee up. In order to add new fibers, she opens the end of the thread thus rolled and inserts there two more bunches of fibers, also combined unequally, and she rolls toward the right, that is, rubbing in the opposite direction, from the upper part of the thigh toward the knee. Once the adding is done, she rolls the two bunches of added fibers toward the left, as she had done with the first two bunches, and so on, rubbing the fibers on the right thigh with the right hand. In order to roll, she rubs them up the thigh; in order to add, down the thigh. Two bunches of fibers give a finer thread, and by twisting together two or more threads one obtains the thickness desired for the work in mind. The finer the thread, the more delicate the weaving will be.

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283
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When it is in the form of a skein, one should take the opportunity to wash and bleach the thread, and also to dye it. They ordinarily use vegetable dyes. The preferred colors are: reddish, obtained from ōnõñã pũrĩ (carajurú, see VII -- 3, e /sic; see VII, 3, b, p. 433/), yellow, by means of a small batata resembling ginger and which is called in Nheengatú makaratañia, and a dark one, which is obtained by cooking the dyawé shrub (genipap). From the skein one later rolls the thread into large balls, which are kept in a sieve, in order not to become soiled.

/194 cont./

286 In woven work as well as in plaited work they combine
531 elements of various colors, producing very regular and pleasant designs. Due to their regularity and finish, some of their work almost reaches perfection.

*192 d) Basketry and plaited work.

285 For their basketry -- and all this work is executed by men --
[462] the raw material is more varied. They use embira or the liber of
[342] some trees, especially that which they call pi'ĩ-karõ-gõ. They
[227] use palms, with a simple plaiting of the leaflets, on the walls of the homes and, more rarely, also on the ceilings. They use strips of paxiúba (waxtá), patauá (yumũ), and jacitára (wai-tu, a palm of sarmentose and aerial caulis) for mats (i'mĩ-sa) and fish enclosures (sũxteri-ka). It is with the uambé cipo (mĩ'sĩ) that they manufacture the baskets called aturás and the nassas for fishing. But it is especially the arumã (wõhõ), reduced to strips (wõhõ-phĩ), that they use the most, because with them they prepare baskets, sieves, and the tipití /manioc press/.

[824] The arumã (Schinosiphon /Ischnosiphon/ ovatus, Kckes., of the family of the Marantaceae) is a plant of "terra firma," but humid, with wide leaves, /195/ the stalk of which may exceed two meters. From it are separated strips, which, after
[386] being dried, acquire the yellowish color of our chair cane. When
[531] they want to execute their designs, the natives dye the little straws with their vegetable dyes. Sometimes they are colored on only one side, for example, for the designs on the inside of the sieves.

According to the purpose, the width of the meshes and the shape will vary.

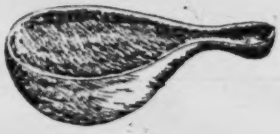
For the plaiting, they make the straws quite even; they put them in good order on the ground (or on a mat), and, squatting, steadying them with the feet, they begin to plait with transverse colored or uncolored splints, according to the designs that they intend to make.

/205 cont./

*192 415 824 4) Cuias and calabashes. Moreover they use cuias (wahá-ro) and calabashes (ỹaxsã), or ỹahã, ña'sã, of diverse sizes and shapes, /206/ as vessels for the most varied uses: to take water, to prepare chibé, to distribute the caarí, to store their colored powders, to manufacture the maracá (see VII -- 3, c (3)), etc.

a) The calabashes, obtained from the creeping calabash, Cucúrbita lagenária, Lin., of the Cucurbitaceae (yaxsã-ga), are used, when dried, without further work. The most important use for the calabashes is the making of the maracás and as containers for the colored powders.

*192 • 386 415 [824] b) The cuias, from the plant called cuieira or cuietezeira (Crescentia cuyete /cujete/, Lin., of the Bignoniaceae), are used to take water, chibé, mingau, etc. and exhibit an interior surface of lustrous black color. The woman manages this with the help of the wahá-ko (that is to say, cuia water; from wahá, cuia, and oxkó, water, liquid, juice).



Cuia (wahá-ro)

They slash the bark of the plant called wahá-ko-gõ (39),

39. Pe. João Marchesi called our attention to the natives' custom of naming a vegetable after the use that they make of it.

cumati (myrcia atramentífera, B. Rod.), which exudes a dark red liquid; or they take scrapings from it, which, left for some time in a water infusion, produce a thick dark liquid, the wahá-kó.

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• 386 415 *[192] The wahá-kó is spread in the interior part of the cuia with a brush, letting it dry afterwards. The operation is repeated a second time and more, until it reaches the thickness of approxin ately one millimeter. Directly afterwards urine is spread on the ground and on this area they turn upside down, on small pieces of wood, the cuias that they wish to paint. The ammonia that comes from the urine transforms the layer of wahá-kó in the interior of the cuia into a black, shiny, and quite adherent varnish.

The same result is obtained by applying mandioca leaves saturated in urine over the layer of wahá-kó.

5) Other utilitarian objects.

824 The Indian has known how to obtain from the nature that surrounds him many other objects and resources for his life.

We shall recall some:

*[192] [515] /207/ a) Papóque. The papóque, in Tukano pápwa-khá-sõtí, is the embira of a tree that produces foam, and they wash their heads with it, for lack of soap.

*[192] [276] b) Tauarí. Táwari, as is also said in Tukano (couratari tauarí, of the family of the Lecythidaceae), is also an embira, which unrolls into very thin and flexible sheets that are used as cigar wrappers. They are obtained from the bark by striking it with a mallet until all the ligneous part has been detached.

*[192] [415] [532] c) Bags, cueio, and masks. The tururí, in Tukano waxsó-gõ, is a tree of several species of Manicariao, from whose liber or bast they prepare the bags for the ipadú, the masks (see VII -- 3, d (2)), and the waxsó-ro (in Nheengatú cueio) for dances (cf. loincloth, VII -- 3, d (2)). Once the branch or trunk that suits them is chosen, they cut it and start to beat the bark with a wooden mallet until /in the original source the line of type that follows these words is the duplicate of one that properly appears later in the paragraph, while the line that belongs here is missing/ as if it were a shirt sleeve or a cape. With a cutting object (formerly a taquara /a bamboo/) they detach the part that they want. The

/292 cont./ In the Yaxkẽ Waxsó-ro there is a beautiful combination of the woven and the strung, using colorful glass beads. One admires in it a pleasing combination of colors, proportion and regularity in the design, and a perfect finishing of the piece. In the woven part the mesh is diagonal. It also presents a combination of colored fibers for the design effect. In the choice of colors, as well as in the finishing, there is revealed good /293/ taste, which makes this weaving a beautiful adornment for the women in the dances. With beads or with colored fibers, the designs are the Greek frets /Port. gregas/ characteristic of these tribes.

6) /sic; b)/ Designs.

4) /sic; 1)/ Mural designs. The designs painted on the bark that makes up the walls of the houses do not reveal artistic taste (48).

48. For example, the representation of human figures with the disproportional and shapeless trunk, the neck represented by a vertical stroke, etc.

It is probable that what seems to us scrawling or caricature is the stylization of legendary representations. Accepting this possibility, however, one does not perceive any skill in the strokes. The circumferences are made with perfection. Perhaps through the influence of the civilized, they use a string for this, fixing one of the ends and tying to the other a wooden point which will leave a regular mark, like the point of a compass.

For the mural paintings, they use clay of different colors (principally white, yellow, reddish, bluish), diluted in the latex of Õxtã-fĩĩmĩ (that is, the sorva, Couma utilis, Mell., and other species), which, after having dried, acquires great stability and resistance to the inclemencies and does not change colors.

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4th. --. The paintings are done with the color:

a) black obtained from the leaves of a plant called dyá-wé, known as jenipapo /genipap/, or from the shrub called we'é. From the decoction of the leaves of the jenipapo left in the open air there is produced a dark lotion which they use to color the hair when it is getting white. From the husk of the pod of the ingá laterifólia, they extract, also by maceration, a black color used for the designs on the stools.

/295/ b) The color red from the Õnõñá or carajurú /carajura/ (51)

51. Carajurú (or crajurú, as Gonçalves Dias writes -- Relatório da Província do Amazonas, I, p. 766), also known as piranga or pariri, is a climber of the family of the Bignoniaceae (the Bignonia chica of Humboldt or arrabidaea chica of Verlot). From the dried leaves left in maceration for some days is deposited a red powder, insoluble in water, which is kept in calabashes and mixed with oil or hot resin when they want to paint. The painting with carajurú evidently has a magic character. Thus, it figures in the rite of the puberty initiation, and the pajé uses it to paint his own body and his objects when he is called to attend to some patient. They admit that, when "blown" by the pajé, the carajurú acquires an extraordinary prophylactic virtue; for this reason they use it to paint, with small circumferences, the face of the newly born children, and, afterwards, when a name is given to them and whenever there is sickness or fear of sickness.

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and from the Mõ'sĩ or urucú (52).

52. The urucú (the bixa orellana or arbórea, Hub., of the family of the Bixaceae) is used, says Koch G. (Z. I. 448), with saliva, oil, or plant's milk; it is not as resistant as the color from the carajurú and fades in the light.

4: Silva--434 M-4, 5 (1947-1958) 1962 SQ19 Tucano SQ19

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302 All these colors are quite resistant, since they last many days, in spite of their frequent baths.

• 386 Very frequently one finds women with the face more or less powdered with red; it is the painting called Tu-dyó-kūsé. They explained that it is only in order not to feel the heat of the sun so much during the work in the clearing. These powders are prepared with the urucú and carajurú.

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304 They do not use true tattooing, and the natives of the present generation do not even seem to know about it (53).

53. Wallace, however, stated a century ago (o. c.): -- "These Indians (of the Uaupés) make tattoos, but on a small scale: for this they practice along the arms a row of pricks of circular shape. The Tucanos are distinguished from the other tribes by three vertical blue lines that they draw on the upper lip in place of mustaches." Through the ancient explorers we know of the tattoos of other tribes of the Amazon, for example, the Yavarí, Urupá, Suarirana, Periquita, all located on the river Tapajoz (cf. "Roteiro" /Logbook/ of 1759, n. 54). As for the tribes of the Rio Negro (without specifying whether the natives of the Uaupés are included), Cônego /Canon/ Andre Fernandes de Souza writes (o. c. 455): "Some pierce the ears, lips, and nose, into which they introduce feathers and sticks, these operations costing them unbearable pain; others draw on the skin many permanent black lines, using these industrious deformities, not so much for distinction of their tribe, as in order to cause an imposturous terror in their enemies." Concerning the Desana, 50 years ago Koch G. (Z. I. 264) stated that they are the only ones of the Caiarí who use tattooing executed with the palm thorn. This is two parallel blue lines, from the lower lip to the chin.